

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2016 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Criminal Justice

CS/SB 230 — Missing Persons with Special Needs

by Appropriations Committee and Senator Dean

The bill addresses personal safety of persons with special needs who elope (wander) by providing personal devices to aid search-and-rescue efforts for such persons. For this purpose, the bill creates pilot projects to provide these devices and also provides for a specific appropriation.

The bill creates a pilot project in Alachua, Columbia, Hamilton, and Suwannee Counties, which is administered by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Florida; a pilot project in Palm Beach County, which is administered by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the Florida Atlantic University; and a pilot project in Hillsborough County, which is administered by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of South Florida.

The bill provides that for the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the sum of \$100,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Florida, the sum of \$100,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at Florida Atlantic University, and the sum of \$100,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of South Florida.

Under each pilot project, the administering center must select project participants based on criteria the center develops. Criteria must include, at a minimum, the person's risk of elopement. Qualifying participants are selected on a first-come, first-serve basis by the center to the extent of available funding within the center's existing resources. Each project must be voluntary and free of charge to project participants.

The personal devices, which are attachable to clothing or otherwise worn, must be provided by the center to the sheriff's offices of the participating counties. The sheriff's offices, in conjunction with the center, distribute the devices to project participants. Each center funds any costs associated with monitoring the devices.

Each center must submit a preliminary report by December 1, 2016, and a final report by December 15, 2017, to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives describing the implementation and operation of its pilot project. The bill specifies what must be included, at a minimum, in the report. Each final report must also provide recommendations for modification or continued implementation of the project.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 115-1